

be to set up a committee whose consent to all changes of name for a given list would be needed. As it is an international question, the acceptance of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature seems the right thing even when this cuts across the personal prejudices which we nearly all have. The writer has a great many.—A. J. WIGHTMAN (F.R.E.S.).

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### NOMENCLATURE: A PLEA FOR COMMON SENSE.

By Brigadier-General B. H. COOKE, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O.

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In the February number of the *Entomologist's Record* Mr Warren asks me what is my remedy for the present chaotic situation as regards nomenclature.

My first and foremost suggestion is to exercise common sense, and to make things as simple as possible for the great bulk of practical entomologists. Most of them, as I have suggested before, are not in the least interested in discussions as to whether a name was coined in 1775 or in 1778. They want to be certain of the identity of an insect when they see it mentioned in print.

Not only has the present system of sweeping changes of names little, if any, scientific value, it has the effect of discouraging budding collectors. South's *Butterflies of the British Isles* is still the standard work as far as such collectors are concerned. The new edition published in 1928 contained a revised list of 24 new names. Of these I think I am right in saying that only 6 agree as regards both generic and specific names with the list published by the Nomenclature Committee in 1934.

To take one instance, the old edition of South named the Small Skipper *thaumas*, the new edition calls it *flava*, the 1934 list of the Nomenclature Committee introduces *sylvestris* and, for all I know, may have made a further change by now. How can the young collector be expected to deal with this state of affairs? For some years I collected on the Continent, and got to know, and to correspond and collect with many foreign entomologists. No question ever arose about correct nomenclature. One list of names was referred to, and was recognised by all. Confusion was non-existent.

As regards remedies. I suggest that the broad principles to work on might be the following:—

(1) Clear our minds of all obsessions regarding antique records where they involve unnecessary changes, and realise that the one and only object of giving names is to enable insects to be easily identified.

(2) Retain, as far as possible, all specific names that have become generally known to living entomologists during the last 20 or 30 years.

(3) Absolutely bar the transfer of a well-known name from one species to another.

I can assure my friend Mr Warren that I have no desire to imitate the late Borkhausen. I have no affection for any particular names, only a wholesale dislike for unnecessary complication. As regards *bellargus*, my rather feeble little joke has been taken too seriously. Perhaps that name is not really coming back into fashion, and I may have misread the 1934 Nomenclature Committee's list. Or possibly the name has again been altered (to *adonis* ?).